

From Chagdud Khadro, October, 2024

Lama Tsultrim Allione, the founder and spiritual director of Tara Mandala, is a powerful inspiration to Western Buddhist practitioners in the Tibetan tradition. She has received guidance and transmission from the greatest Tibetan masters and has upheld their teachings with great integrity and diligence, while building and supporting a splendid Dharma center.

Although I first became familiar with her through her book, *Women of Wisdom*, in the 1980s, we met in person in 2008 during consecration ceremonies in our respective centers. When she visited my center in southern Brazil, her dignity, combined with a straightforward way of speaking, and her listening with genuine interest in others, impressed me. Later, when I participated in Drubchens (Great Accomplishment Ceremonies) and gave teachings in Tara Mandala, this initial impression deepened into a valued friendship. Seeing her in her own home and surrounded by very capable women and men, revealed her ability to prioritize the Dharma above ordinary mundane tasks, yet maintaining a womanly warmth in her interactions. From watching her way with others, I have learned to slow down and consider, to take time and filter out static and fast-forward tendencies.

Lama Tsultrim, like Machig Labdron, the great Chöd dakini whose lineage she follows, is a householder who has children and adored grandchildren, a home filled with warmth and love and many family stories to tell. When her beloved husband David died of a heart attack, perhaps I could understand her loss and grief because my husband had passed away a few years before. One's

hollowness of grief gives way the vital necessity of honoring that love by cultivating compassion for others and continuing the projects we started together.

Lama Tsultrim has taught her students carefully and according to the stringent standards of Buddhist knowledge and wisdom. Over the years, having observed them carefully, she had confidently authorized some of them to become teachers themselves, and she has invited teachers from other disciplines to teach at Tara Mandala. She maintains a broad perspective on the skillful means to train the mind to its highest spiritual potential while adhering rigorously to the lineages she has received from Buddhist masters.

Chagdud Khandro